products. Vaccines, diagnostic kits, drug delivery systems and bioremediation methods, tissue culture protocols, bio-fertilizers and biopesticides are at various stages of development and commercialization.

To boost the biotech sector for the Biotech Product and Process Development, the Government has given various incentives to the biotech industry through fiscal measures, custom and excise duty exemptions, tax holidays for R&D expenditure, encouraging Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), speedy clearance of FDI projects by Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB), constitution of Fast Track Committee (FTC) under Foreign Investment Implementation Authority (FIIA) etc. To inculcate biotech industry in small-scale sector, a Task Force and a Biotechnology Cell have been created in the Ministry of Small Scale Industries, Agro and Rural Industries in association with Department of Biotechnology. A sensitization programme in the form of workshops has jointly been initiated for awareness building in SSI entrepreneurs.

State Governments have taken initiatives to establish biotechnology parks and incubators, separate biotech departments and institutes specially to focus on local problems. Successful mission projects with biotechnological interventions are under implementation in the areas of vaccines, coffee improvement, herbal product development and establishment of genomic databases. International collaboration has been strengthened with many developed and developing countries in the areas of mutual benefit. Research in new areas like nanobiology, structural and computational biology has also been initiated. The main objective of the above measures is to develop a strong capability in the field and harness the potential of biotechnology for societal benefit and economic progress.

Reduction in Green House Gases

*353. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU): Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to ratify the Kyoto Protocol of 1997, for a time bound reduction of Green House Gases, responsible for global warming and climatic changes;

(b) if so, the details in this regard and the steps taken so far, in that direction;

(c) the steps taken by Government for reduction of green house gases, since 1997, so far; and

(d) the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (d) India acceded to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in August, 2002. The Kyoto Protocol commits developed countries to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases by an average of 5.2% with reference to 1990 emission levels during the period 2008-2012. It does not provide for similar emission reduction commitments for the developing countries.

The steps taken by the Government to address greenhouse gas emissions include measures relating to energy efficiency, energy conservation, power sector reforms, renewable energy programmes, fuel switching to cleaner energy, afforestation and conservation of forests, efficient utilization of coal, reduction of gas flaring, installation of heat recovery system in oil and power sector, standardization of fuel efficient irrigation pump sets and better cultivar practices. These measures have, helped to increase energy efficiency, decrease pollution and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Literacy among SCs and STs

*354. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of literacy in the country and in different States, as per the latest statistics;

(b) the percentage of literacy among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes;

(c) what steps Government propose to take to raise the literacy rate among the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes; and

(d) the impact of privatisation of higher education on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes students?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) The percentage of literacy in the country as per 2001 census is 65.38%. The State-wise literacy rate is annexed as Statement. (*See* below).